

# INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE USE OF LAPTOP COMPUTERS FOR THE JULY 2011 CALIFORNIA BAR EXAMINATION

- Revised 5/13/11 -

**ATTENTION:**  
**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU CAREFULLY READ THIS ENTIRE BULLETIN**  
**THE INSTRUCTIONS HAVE CHANGED SINCE**  
**ADMINISTRATION OF THE FEBRUARY 2011 CALIFORNIA BAR EXAMINATION**

## LAPTOP CERTIFICATION

If you wish to use a laptop computer to take the July 2011 California Bar Examination, you must:

1. Apply online;
2. Select a laptop test center;
3. Pay the additional laptop computer fee;
4. Ensure your laptop computer is configured for access to the Internet;
5. Confirm your laptop computer meets the minimum requirements listed below;
6. Download and install SofTest (the designated software) **onto the laptop computer you will be using** for the examination;
7. Download the exam files that will be used for each of the four (4) written sessions of the examination;
8. Download, complete and upload the Mock Examination exam answer file using SofTest;
9. Upload the four (4) exam files, which contain your answers to the six (6) essay and two (2) Performance Test questions, **as soon as possible following the conclusion of the examination and not later than the published deadline**;
10. Verify the successful upload of your answer files by reviewing your Exam History in ExamSoft; and,
11. Not delete or uninstall SofTest or any SofTest Program Directory Files or Folders until results for the examination have been released.

Applicants with disabilities who wish to use their own laptop computers to take the examination must comply with the same requirements as those taking the examination under standard conditions.

Applicants may initiate and complete the certification process with ExamSoft following receipt of their admittance tickets. Beginning approximately ten (10) weeks prior to the examination, admittance tickets are forwarded to applicants after the State Bar's Office of Admissions has determined they are eligible to take the examination. Applicants assigned to laptop computer test centers must be certified no later than the first day of the examination. If your laptop or the software is not operational on examination day, you will have to handwrite the examination.

Applicants who are unable to use their laptop computer on examination day and/or who withdraw their requests to use laptop computers will not be entitled to a refund of the laptop fee.

If you wish to request a test center change, the Los Angeles Office of Admissions must receive your request no later than June 15, 2011. Following receipt of the request, you will be assigned to the requested test center, if space is available. Assignment to a test center does not establish your eligibility to take the examination. Only after all eligibility requirements are met will an admittance ticket be sent to you.

## EXAMINATION INFORMATION

ExamSoft's FlexSite Internet-based examination delivery option will be used for the essay and Performance Test portions of the examination. This will require applicants to upload their examination answer files via the Internet. Applicants are not required to have Internet connectivity during the examination, but are required to have access to Internet connectivity immediately following the examination to meet the upload deadline. **It is your responsibility to be familiar with SofTest and your computer as technical support will not be provided at the test center before, during or after any examination sessions.**

The Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) portion of the examination is not available on computer. Do not bring your laptop computer to the MBE sessions of the examination, which for the standard examination schedule will be on Wednesday, July 27, 2011. You must take your computer home after the Tuesday afternoon session and bring it back to the test center on Thursday morning. You will not be allowed to remove your computer from the test center until a session has concluded.

**ALL four (4) exam files that contain your answers, including Thursday's written sessions (Essay questions 4, 5 and 6 and Performance Test – B), MUST be uploaded no later than 12:00 p.m. (Pacific Time), Friday, July 29, 2011. Answers not uploaded by the deadline will not be graded. Applicants who took the examination but did not upload an exam answer file will receive a grade of zero (0) for those answers.**

If possible, applicants should not wait until Friday to upload their exam answer files, but instead are encouraged to upload each of their exam answer files, including the two (2) that contain their answers to Tuesday's written sessions (Essay questions 1, 2 and 3 and Performance Test – A) as soon as possible following the completion of the examination sessions to ensure that their computer and software are working properly.

Answers will be printed and assembled into the corresponding question book covers that have been completed by the applicants taking the examination. More information regarding the process will be provided in advance of the examination and at the examination test center.

## EXAMINATION DAY INFORMATION

On the day of the examination, those at laptop test centers must be seated **no later than 8:20 a.m.**, at which time instructions for getting your laptop computer ready to use will begin. You should plan to arrive at the test center at least 15 minutes prior to that time so that you can find your seat and get comfortable. General instructions regarding administration of the examination will commence promptly at 8:30 a.m. Examination questions will be distributed in hard copy just before the beginning of each examination session.

If your laptop computer is not ready to begin at the designated time, you must begin the examination by handwriting. **NO** extra time will be provided to ensure that a laptop computer is ready to be used before the examination session begins. Technical assistance **will not** be available.

**In the event a software, hardware or power failure occurs before or during administration of the examination, you will be required to handwrite your answers to the examination.** Applicants are not permitted to bring other laptop computers, typewriters or word processors into the standard laptop test centers to use as backups.

## EXAMSOFT INFORMATION

To ensure the security of the examination process, applicants are required to use SofTest software to take the written portions of the July 2011 California Bar Examination. The program

provides a simple word processing program and is designed to be familiar to users of WordPerfect or Microsoft Word. It blocks access to non-SofTest files on an applicant's laptop computer during administration of the examination and can be used on virtually any modern computer, i.e., purchased within the last 3 – 4 years.

To use a laptop computer during administration of the examination, applicants must:

- Have experience working with the laptop computer and the software;
- Have installed SofTest software and downloaded the Mock Exam and the four (4) exam files that are required for the examination to the computer that will be used during the examination (once downloaded to a computer, you cannot transfer the software and files to another computer);
- Have completed the Mock Examination using SofTest and uploaded the Mock Examination exam answer file;
- Have signed a "Release of Liability" form, which confirms you have accepted the conditions associated with using your laptop computer and that the Committee of Bar Examiners assumes no liability in the event there is a technical or mechanical failure of the equipment or software during the examination;
- Begin and/or continue with the examination by handwriting in the event there is a malfunction with the laptop computer and/or software due to technical difficulties; and,
- Upload the four (4) exam files used during the examination, which contain your answers to the six (6) essay and (2) Performance Test questions, immediately following conclusion of the examination and no later than the published deadline.

External standard or ergonomic keyboards and equipment such as a mouse are allowed. These items may be wireless.

**SofTest Minimum System Requirements:** SofTest can be used on virtually any modern computer (i.e. purchased within the last 3-4 years). Specific system requirements are noted below.

It is not possible to take secure exams through a virtual operating system such as Microsoft's Virtual Machine, Parallels or VMware, VMware Fusion or any other virtual operating system environment. Although SofTest can be installed and registered on virtual platforms, it will only be enabled for non-secure Practice Exams.

#### **PC Requirements:**

- CPU = 1 GHz Pentium III or Industry Equivalent
- RAM = 1 GB
- Drives = 50 MB of free space
- Operating System = English 32-bit Versions of Windows XP, 32-bit and 64-bit Versions of Windows Vista and Windows 7. SofTest may not be used in virtual operating systems.
- Software = Internet Explorer 7.0 or later
- Internet Access for SofTest Installation, Exam Download and Upload
- Screen Resolution must be 1024x768 or higher
- Administrator level account permissions

## Mac Requirements:

In order to use SofTest on your Apple Macbook or Macbook Pro natively, you must have:

- CPU = Intel processor
- RAM = 512 MB
- Drives = 50 MB or higher free disk space
- Operating System = MAC OS X 10.5.8 or higher (Leopard or Snow Leopard). SofTest may not be used in virtual operating systems.
- Software = Internet connection for downloading/uploading exams
- Administrator account ([Instructions](#))

In some cases on PC laptops, certain antivirus applications may block SofTest from starting properly or can affect SofTest's performance during an examination. Visit ExamSoft's Knowledge Base at <http://support.examsoft.com> to determine if your computer is running any of the programs listed and for instructions on how to disable your antivirus/antispyware applications **before** installing SofTest and how to re-enable them after installation is complete.

**You must download SofTest through [www.examsoft.com/calbar](http://www.examsoft.com/calbar) even if it was previously installed for law school or for a previous First-Year Law Students' Examination or California Bar Examination.**

**Installing SofTest:** After you have received your admittance ticket, go to the ExamSoft Custom Home Page for the California Bar Examination at: [www.examsoft.com/calbar](http://www.examsoft.com/calbar). To begin the process, do the following:

- Locate the Exam Takers box in the upper left hand portion of the page;
- Log in using your File Number (Applicant ID) and Password. Your File Number can be found on your application acknowledgment and your Password is your date of birth, entered as mmddyyyy. If your File number is less than 6 digits, add leading zeros to your number. **Do not use your Application Number as your Applicant ID.;**
- Download SofTest;
- Install and register your copy of SofTest. Five (5) exam files (four (4) for use during the examination and one associated with the Mock Examination) will download automatically; and,
- Check ExamSoft confirmation e-mails to ensure the institution displayed is 'State Bar of California'.

If you have an email spam blocker, please add [barsupport@examsoft.com](mailto:barsupport@examsoft.com) and [support@examsoft.com](mailto:support@examsoft.com) to your contact or safe list so that you can receive the emails that will be sent to you during the certification process and as confirmation during the examination answer file upload process.

You must complete the certification process no later than the first day of the examination. After receiving your admittance ticket, you should complete the process as soon as possible so if you encounter problems, ExamSoft will have the opportunity to assist you in resolving them prior to the examination. If your laptop or SofTest is not operational when the examination begins, you will have to handwrite your examination answers.

**Downloading Your Exam File:** During the laptop certification process, the Mock Examination exam file and four (4) blank exam files for you to record your answers during administration of the examination will be automatically downloaded to your computer.

**Certification Confirmation:** After successfully completing the certification process, you will be advised on-screen and via email by ExamSoft that you have done so and that the five (5) exam files have been downloaded. If you do not receive the confirmation emails, you have not successfully completed the certification process for the July 2011 California Bar Examination. You may check your certification status and view your download/upload history at [www.examsoft.com/calbar](http://www.examsoft.com/calbar). Log in using the Exam Takers box, click the Exam History button to review your record and confirm that you have downloaded the exam and mock exam files and have uploaded the mock exam answer file. **Applicants can have only one exam file for each written session of the examination.**

Your laptop computer can have *both* a registered copy of the Academic and Bar Edition versions of SofTest at the same time. Installing the Bar Edition of SofTest on your computer for the California Bar Examination will not interfere with using SofTest for your law school examinations. If you have a copy of both the Bar Edition and Academic versions of SofTest on the same laptop computer, you will have two shortcuts on your Windows Desktop; **SOFTTEST** and **SOFTTEST - BAR EDITION**. Additionally, your SofTest Start Window (the first window that appears after launching SofTest) will have the option of selecting the "Bar Edition" or "Academic" version of SofTest at the beginning of your examination. Please ensure that you select the "Bar Edition" version for taking the California Bar Examination. Mac laptops will only show one icon for SofTest. When launched, the correct version can be verified by the border color- blue for the Academic version and gold for the Bar Edition.

**DO NOT Copy the ExamSoft Program from One Computer to Another.** For example, do not download the software to a desktop computer and try to manually move it to your laptop computer. If you move the software and exam files to another computer, an error message will be displayed when you attempt to begin the examination. If such an error message is displayed, you will be unable to use your computer to take the examination and you will be required to handwrite your answers. You may **NOT** download and install SofTest to more than one computer.

**The Mock Examination:** The Mock Examination confirms your laptop is compatible with SofTest. It enables users to familiarize themselves with how to open, write and upload answer files prior to the first day of the examination. The Mock Examination must be completed and the related exam answer file uploaded to complete the certification process and ensure your computer has been configured properly for use on the day of the examination and for uploading your exam answer files. You will receive an email confirmation after you have uploaded the exam answer file for your Mock Exam. Until you receive this email confirmation, you are NOT certified. For instructional videos and guides on taking the Mock Examination, please go to <http://support.examsoft.com>.

**Practice Examinations:** After you install SofTest, you **must** become familiar with its features. There are two options for familiarizing users with SofTest, which are discussed below. You are **STRONGLY** encouraged to take advantage of both.

**1. Practice Examination Built into SofTest** – After installing SofTest, launch the program by double-clicking the **SofTest Bar Edition** icon on your Windows Desktop and then click 'Launch SofTest'. When **SofTest** opens click the "Practice Exam" button. This enables you to familiarize yourself with the **SofTest** exam environment and word processing features. The Practice Exam *cannot* be saved and *no answer file* will be uploaded. You may use this Practice Exam as many times as you wish.

**2. Internet Delivered Mock Examination** – Additional copies of the Mock Examination are available to familiarize you with SofTest. Internet connectivity is **only** required to download an additional copy of the exam file and upload the exam answer file. **NO** Internet connectivity is required while taking the examination. Instructions for downloading additional copies of the Mock Examination may be found at [www.examsoft.com/fsej](http://www.examsoft.com/fsej).

If you have questions on the use of the software, visit the ExamSoft Knowledge Base at <http://support.examsoft.com>. If you encounter technical problems during the laptop certification process, you should first go to the Knowledge Base, as most problems can be easily resolved through ExamSoft's support guides and troubleshooter. Should you continue to have technical problems, however, please contact ExamSoft Client Support at 866-429-8889. Technical support is available 5:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. (Pacific Time), Monday through Friday. Neither the Office of Admissions nor the Committee of Bar Examiners is available to answer technical, installation or certification questions.

### **IMPORTANT PRE-EXAMINATION DAY INFORMATION**

You **must** bring your own power cord to the test center each day of the examination. Although an electrical outlet will be provided to you, be sure to have a fully charged battery in case of a temporary power outage. You will not be allowed to tape power cords into the electrical outlet, nor will you be allowed to plug any other item besides your computer into the electrical outlet. You **must not** bring any floppy disks, CD's or DVD's with you or in your laptop computer, into the examination room. If such items are found in the examination room or in an applicant's laptop computer, they will be confiscated and will not be returned.

**Once you have completed the laptop certification process, do not make changes to the configuration of your laptop computer. DO NOT** delete or uninstall SofTest or any SofTest Program directory files or folders until **results for the examination have been released. Do not have someone else download the software for you.**

**Instructions:** Pay careful attention to and follow the instructions provided during the examination. Use great care when highlighting and deleting during the examination, as well as using other functions that may significantly change a document. Applicants who do not take the time to become familiar with their laptop computers or with the word processing functions should consider handwriting their examination answers. No extra time or other administrative relief will be granted in the event that an examination file is deleted or otherwise altered.

**Printing of Answers:** Answers will not be printed at the test centers. The answer files will be retrieved from ExamSoft's secure server and printed after the examination has concluded using a standard format, such as line spacing and font, which may cause the final printed answer to look different from what you saw on your laptop computer screen, although the content will not have changed. If there is a problem with the printing of your answers, you will be notified and may be required to contact ExamSoft for assistance in retrieving the file or be asked to bring your laptop computer to the Office of Admissions so that the encrypted backup copy of the examination answer(s) on your laptop computer's hard drive can be retrieved.

**Rented Laptop Computers:** Applicants who have rented laptop computers to use during the examination should not return them to the rental company until results for the July 2011 California Bar Examination have been released.

**Laptop Computer Problems After Certification.** If after completing the certification process with ExamSoft, you experience problems with your laptop computer that would prohibit you from using it for the examination, i.e., it becomes inoperable, you may ask to have another computer certified and to download additional exam files through the “Re-Download SofTest” link after you log in with your Applicant ID and password at <http://www.examsoft.com/calbar>. Authorization will not be granted for the purpose of having a backup computer available in the event a computer malfunctions during the examination.

**It is your responsibility to be familiar with your equipment, the SofTest software and instructions provided by the Committee and ExamSoft on its website prior to the start of the examination. It is your responsibility to upload your answers after the examination.**

**Any attempt to disable or tamper with SofTest’s security features is prohibited. If it is discovered that tampering has been attempted, this information will be reported to the Committee of Bar Examiners for whatever action it may deem appropriate, which could include disqualification for admission to practice law in California.**

**Checklist:** To ensure proper and complete certification of your laptop for use during the examination, use the following checklist.

- Install SofTest software with ExamSoft.
- Register SofTest. (All five necessary exam files (four for use during the examination and one associated with the Mock Examination) will download automatically.)
- Take the Mock Examination.
- Upload Mock Examination Answer File.
- Verify that you have received seven (7) emails confirming that each of the steps listed above has been completed.
- Confirm your laptop certification status and download/upload history by going to [www.examsoft.com/calbar](http://www.examsoft.com/calbar) and logging in to your account using the Exam Takers box.